

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KAMPAL 03109 180948Z

11

ACTION AF-18

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FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT AMIN'S REMARKS ON HIS RETURN TO UGANDA

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF OCT. 18 VOICE OF UGANDA ARTICLE REPORTING
PRESIDENT AMIN'S REMARKS TO PRESS ON HIS ARRIVAL AT ENTEBBE
AIRPORT FROM A FIVE-DAY TRIP TO MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES.

BEGIN TEXT. THE PRESIDENT, GENERAL IDI AMIN, YESTERDAY RETURNED
HOME AFTER VISITS TO A NUMBER OF ARAB COUNTRIES CURRENTLY INVOLVED
IN FIERCE FIGHTING IN THE MIDDLE EAST WAR.

AT A BRIEFING HE HELD AT ENTEBBE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
SHORTLY AFTER HIS ARRIVAL BY A ROYAL SAUDI AIR FORCE PLANE THE
PRESIDENT TOLD REPORTERS THAT REPORTS THE WESTERN PRESS WERE
CARRYING ABOUT THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST WERE COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT FROM "WHAT WE HAD SEEN."

HE SAID THAT HIS VISIT TO SYRIA HAD PROVED THAT SYRIA AND
EGYPT WERE NOT THE ONES WHO STARTED THE CURRENT MIDDLE EAST WAR.
THE PRESIDENT MAINTAINED THAT IF THESE TWO COUNTRIES HAD STARTED
THE WAR, THEY COULD HAVE HAD MORE TIME TO MAKE EARLY PREPARATIONS
AND MOBILIZE THEIR TROOPS.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 KAMPAL 03109 180948Z

GENERAL AMIN HIGHLY COMMENDED THE MORALE OF SYRIAN AND

EGYPTIAN SOLDIERS DESPITE THE FACT THAT ISRAEL HAD MADE SURPRISE ATTACK ON THEM. HE NOTED THAT EVERYBODY WAS ANXIOUS TO TAKE ARMS AND GO FIGHTING ON THE FRONT LINE. "PEOPLE ARE MORE UNITED THAN EVER-AND THEY HAVE CAUSE TO DO SO," HE ADDED.

HE TOLD PRESSMEN THAT WHILE HE WAS IN SYRIA HE VISITED CIVILIAN SCENES WHICH ISRAELI SOLDIERS HAD MOMBED. HERE HE SAID THE REMAINS OF HUMAN BODIES COULD BE SEEN. AT THE SAME TIME, HE CONTINUED, OIL REFINERIES BOMBED AND SET ABLAZE BY ISRAELI COULD ALSO BE SEEN STILL BURNING.

REFERRING TO HIS VISIT, THE PRESIDENT SAID IT WAS VERY GOOD FOR HIM TO HAVE VISITED THE BATTLE GROUND AND SEE FOR HIMSELF WHAT WAS GOING ON THERE. HIS OBSERVATION HAD COMPLETELY DISCREDITED THE WESTERN PRESS AND RADIO.

THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT REPORTS BEING CARRIED IN THE WESTERN PRESS WERE MERELY AIMED AT BOOSTING THE MORALE OF ISRAEL, AS IT WAS GIVING A ONE-SIDED PICTURE OF THE ACTUAL SITUATION.

PRESIDENT AMIN WAS THE FIRST HEAD OF STATE TO VISIT THE WAR FRONT SINCE FIGHTING BROKE OUT IN THE MIDDLE EAST 13 DAYS AGO.

ON TUESDAY HE HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN DAMASCUS ATTENDED BY OVER 75 PRESSMEN FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.

WHILE IN SYRIA, PRESIDENT AMIN TOLD THE PRESS, HE WAS PREPARING AS A COMMANDER COULD PREPARE WHERE HIS TROOPS WERE GOING TO FIGHT.

HE DESCRIBED THE GOLAN HEIGHTS WHERE THE UGANDAN SOLDIERS WERE GOING TO FIGHT AS RESEMBLING THE KIGEZI AREA IN WESTERN UGANDA. HE INDICATED THAT SYRIA RECEIVED THE NEWS THAT UGANDAN SOLDIERS WERE GOING TO FIGHT ALONG SIDE THEM WITH GREAT PLEASURE.

HE PRAISED THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT FOR HAVING MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO INSPECT THE ISRAELI SOLDIERS WHO HAD BEEN TAKEN PRISONERS OF WAR, MANY OF WHOM HAD TOLD HIM THEY HAD BEEN FORCED TO FIGHT AGAINST ARABS. THEY ALSO TOLD HIM THEY WERE

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 KAMPAL 03109 180948Z

BEING TREATED WELL IN SYRIAN CAMPS.

THE GENERAL ALSO TOLD PRESSMEN OF HOW ONE OF THE ISRAELI PRISONERS OF WAR WHO DID NOT KNOW HIM REQUESTED HIM TO SEND GREETINGS TO THE PRISONER'S FATHER.

HE THEN EXPLAINED "THE ACTUAL BATTLE HAS NOT STARTED IN THE MIDDLE EAST, ALTHOUGH IN THE LAST TEN DAYS ISRAEL HAS LOST

THE BEST OF HER FIGHTER PILOTS." HE OBSERVED THAT OVER THE LAST TEN DAYS UP TO 500 FIGHTER PLANES HAD BEEN ATTACKING SYRIA REACH DAY, BUT THIS HAD NOW ALMOST STOPPED. HE ACCUSED ISRAEL OF EVADING TO TELL THE WORLD ITS ACTUAL CASUALTY FIGURES SINCE THE WAR STARTED.

TO MEET THE PRESIDENT AS HE STEPPED OUT OF THE PLANE WAS THE MINISTER FOR DEFENCE, MAJOR GENERAL FRANCIS NYNAGWESO, SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS MINISTERS, AND TOP CIVIL SERVANTS.

HE CONVEYED THE GREETINGS HE HAD BROUGHT WITH HIM TO THE PEOPLE OF UGANDA FROM SAUDI ARABIAN, IRAQI, JORDANIAN, AND SYRIAN HEADS OF STATE.

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